Discoverer of Nixon's Backdating Transferred to a New GSA Job

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Mary Walton Livingston, the archivist who discovered the backdating of a deed for former President Nixon's donation of his vice-presidential papers to the National Archives, has been transferred out of her section into a different job.

A source familiar with the transfer said Mrs. Livingston's role with the Nixon deed was the reason behind the move. But that report was denied by a spokesman for the General Services Administration, parent agency of the National Archives and Records Service.

In another GSA-related development, Allan G. Kaupinen, assistant GSA administrator, resigned to take a job in private business. Kaupinen is one of eight GSA officials charged by the Civil Service Commission with political use of the Civil Service System. The commission has charged the eight with circumventing the merit system in the hiring of politically connected job applicants.

Kaupinen's job change had nothing to do with the pending Civil Service Commission charges, according to the GSA. At Kaupinen's new company, an investment firm in Alexandria, it was reported that he was out of town.

In a third matter involving the GSA, a White House spokesman said yesterday the White House was awaiting a report from the GSA about the firing of a $32,000-a-year research specialist who spoke out against a little-known plan for a vast computer network called FEDNET.

John E. Holt, 44, was dismissed by GSA head Arthur F. Sampson. Holt's daughter; Victoria, has appealed in a letter to President Ford "to step in and prevent the dismissal," which is effective Friday.

As Vice President, Mr. Ford criticized the FEDNET project, which was scrapped in July. Critics said the system could have stored information in a massive data bank, and assailed it as a potential invasion of personal privacy.

Reached at her new job yesterday, as senior archivist on the records appraisal staff of the Archives, Mrs. Livingston declined to comment on her job change and the reasons behind it. Previously she was senior archivist in the Office of Presidential Libraries of the National Archives. She reportedly would have had to work with Mr. Nixon or his staff on Mr. Nixon's papers, and thus was persuaded to apply for a transfer.

GSA spokesman Richard Q. Vawter said it was "absolutely false" that GSA head Arthur F. Sampson "pressuerd" the transfer. "The new job is a job that is considered to be a step in her career progression and an experience she should have," Vawter said.

The position, however, reportedly was an additional one created for Mrs. Livingston, who will remain at the same GS-13, step 5, level with an annual salary of $23,433.

Earlier this year Mrs. Livingston gained wide attention when it was revealed that she had reported a manuscript appraiser's attempt to secure information on the papers without the knowledge of Mrs. Livingston's superior.

She later told the Joint Committee on Internal Revenue Taxation staff that the deed of the Nixon gift, dated March 27, 1969, "could not have been Xeroxed or signed until March 27, 1970, or later" because the appraiser didn't have the necessary information until he spoke with her.